

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

RECEIVED

★ OCT 17 1929 ★

Housekeepers' Chat

Thursday, October 17, 1929.

U. S. Department of Agriculture

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

1.9
In 3 Th
Subject: "Washing Blankets and Ironing Shirts." Information from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletins available: "Methods and Equipment for Home Laundering."

--ooOoo--

"Aunt Sammy," said my Next-Door Neighbor, "would you like to see a bedroom that is enviably charming?"

"Certainly--if you can wait till I finish ironing this shirt. I'm on the second sleeve."

"Hurry up," said my Neighbor. "I want to show you my new wool blankets--orchid and green. They are reversible as to color. One side is a lovely orchid, the other a soft green. With ruffled orchid curtains in the bedroom--come on over, Aunt Sammy, you'll have to see it."

As soon as I finished ironing Uncle Ebenezer's shirt, I went over to see my Neighbor's new blankets--they are soft and lovely. She told me there were other color combinations in this particular kind of blanket: blue and rose, rose and gold, rose and green-- all dainty pastel colors.

"How can I keep them soft and fluffy?" asked my Neighbor. "Most wool blankets don't look so pretty, after they are washed. Do you know how they should be laundered?"

"Yes, I know how I laundered mine, and they are still pretty. You know, of course, that moist wool is sensitive to rubbing and heat, and gets hard, yellow, and shrunken, unless you take special precautions. Strong washing powders are hard on blankets. Hot water increases the shrinkage. All water used should be lukewarm. Sometimes people wash their woolens correctly, in mild soap and lukewarm water, and then rinse them in cold water. That's wrong. The cold water causes a sudden contraction, which may be permanent."

"What kind of soap do you use?"

"Any good neutral soap. Use soap in the form of a solution or jelly, and do not rub the soap directly on the wool fabric. Have lots of lukewarm suds. Wool needs more water, in proportion to its bulk, than any other fabric."

"Don't rub the wool. Squeeze and work it in the suds, without rubbing. Press out the extra water, and wash in a second suds, of the same temperature. I wash my woolen garments and blankets by hand. Hand washing is less likely than machine washing to shrink woolens and make them lose their softness."

"Of course one should never boil woolen materials. Squeeze them from the last suds, and rinse free from soap, in several changes of lukewarm water, as near the temperature of the suds as possible. Wring through a loosely set wringer, and be careful not to stretch the material.

"All wool materials should be dried in a warm place, but not near a fire or in direct sunlight. Never allow them to freeze. Blankets may be placed over a line, with a half or fourth on one side. Squeeze the ends occasionally, to remove the excess water. When the blankets are dry, raise the nap by brushing well with a clean, stiff whisk broom. Hand cards, such as are used for combing wool, are even better for this purpose. The warmth of the blanket depends very largely upon the amount of the nap."

"Is that so?" inquired my Neighbor. "Sometimes the nap depends very largely upon the warmth of the blanket, too."

"Don't be facetious," I said. "Washing is no subject to make light of."

"Don't I know it?" exclaimed my Neighbor. "I wish you'd look at my coral-colored sweater--you know, the one I wore so much last winter. Yesterday I washed it, in lukewarm water and mild soap--and now it is so stretched out of shape that I can never wear it again. Is there a new and improved method of washing sweaters?"

"No, but there is a way of drying them. Did you, by any chance, hang your sweater on the clothes line? Yes, I remember now of seeing it sway in the breeze. After a sweater is washed, it should be spread, back down, with sleeves outstretched, on several thicknesses of clean, soft material, laid flat. Then measure the garment, and shape it, according to the dimensions taken before it was washed, and pin in place if necessary. Turn it occasionally, after it is almost dry."

I left my neighbor hastily, after giving this advice, for it suddenly occurred to me that I had left my iron on. Did you ever leave home for a day, and worry most of the time for fear you would go home and find the house a charred ruin? Not that I ever have.

I must tell you about my built-in ironing board, too. It is hinged to the wall, and supported with a prop. Fred made it for me, one rainy Saturday. Many ironing boards of this type are built as part of the house, with a narrow closet, into which they can be folded. In the narrow closet is a shelf for the iron, the sponging cloth, and other small equipment. There are exact measurements and detailed directions for making an ironing board like mine, in the laundry bulletin. I'll be glad to send you the bulletin, if you're interested.

I've learned a good many things from this bulletin. For instance-- how to iron a man's shirt, and the correct way to fold it; how to fold tablecloths and other flat pieces; how to wash curtains and sweaters and pillows.

Here's a question to answer, before we close: "Dear Aunt Sammy: In Monday's menu, you had Fried Green Tomatoes, and you said for us to fry the green tomatoes just as we do ripe tomatoes. Will you please tell me just how this is done?"

R-H.C. 10/17

Certainly I will. Cut each tomato in thick slices, say two or three slices to a tomato. Then flour the slices, and fry them slowly, in a heavy skillet. Use any sort of fat you choose, and be sure to fry the tomatoes slowly, or they'll scorch.

One more question: "Please tell me how to keep the under crust, of a custard pie, from soaking up the filling."

Answer; There is a very simple and easy way to keep the filling from soaking into the pie crust. Simply bake the crust first, until it is delicately brown. Then put in the filling, and bake the pie until the filling sets. This method works just as well with juicy fruit fillings, as with custard and lemon pies.

Tomorrow I'll give you another of the Menu Specialist's delicious Sunday dinners.

#####

